DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
Public Health Service
Health Services *and* Mental Health Administration
Indian Health Service
Rockville, Maryland

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE CIRCULAR NO. 70-I

DEVELOPMENT OF AUTOMATED DATA PROCESSING PROJECT

1. Policy
2 . Purpose
3. Project Protocol
4. Pilot Investigation
5. Special Reports

1. POLICY. The computer at the Albuquerque Data Processing Service Center (DPSC) is now operational. Although the DPSC programmers are presently thoroughly occupied with conversion of current programs new projects can be proposed for the Future by Headquarters, Area' or Service Unit personnel, In order to use the DPSC resources efficiently it is necessary for good foundations to be laid before a new project is presented to Albuquerque for programming.

2. PURPOSE.

   A. To establish procedures for the proposal, approval and development of an automated data processing project.

   B. Any proposed new automated data processing *system* or application will be considered a project.

   c. Any proposed modification to an existing automated data processing system will be considered a project.

     D. A non-recurring printout of data available at the DPSC but not contained in the necessary form in any recurring report will be considered a special report.

   E. This procedure will become effective January 1 1970 Effective July 1, 1971 all contract data processing in effect before that date must be submitteed to be considered for transfer to the DPSC in accordance with this circular.

Dtstribution: P-ABC= under d and E, C under d,
February 3, 1970

3. PROJECT PROTOCOL.

Projects may be proposed by Headquarters, Area-or Service Unit personnel. The Office proposing the project Will prepare a project protocol as outlined below. This project protocol will be submitted to Headquarters, Office of Program Planning and Evaluation, Attention: Systems Consultant, for consideration. Final approval will be made by the Director, Indian Health Service. Project requests originating at the Service Unit must first be submitted to the Area offices- for approval. Each Area must establish its own approval mechanism.

Approved project protocol will be forwarded to IHS Data Processing Services Center, Albuquerque, for. development and installation in accordance with approved work plan for computer system development and test. The office proposing the project will be notified of the action taken.

B. Method. Project protocol must include the following information (the Systems Consultant will assist the program personnel in obtaining this information:

(1) Purpose of the project.

(2) Source data information.

.a. Describe in detail the input data.

b. If source data are presently available in an existing system, or could be captured as a by-product of an existing *system*, identify and describe the proposed method of retrieval from the existing system.

c. If source data are presently available in a manual form, describe the proposed method of making source data available to an automated system.

d. If source data are not presently available, describe the proposed method of gathering the data.

1. Identify the personnel to be responsible for data collection.

2. Estimate man-hours required for data collection.

(3) Estimate volume and frequency of input.

(4) Output desired:

    a. Report content,

    b'. Desired report format

    c. Frequency of reports

    d. Number of copies of reports

    a. Distribution of reports

   f. Other output desired

(5) Estimate Costs:

    a. Personnel and consultants

    b. Travel .

    c. Equipment

    d. Supplies and printing

    e. Other services

(6) The duration of operation of a new project will be one year imlere. otherwise specified in the protocol. If a project is to continue after the. scheduled expiration date, a new protocol must be submitted.

4 . PILOT INVESTIGATION.

A. In the event a reasonable estimate as to time requirements, or other essential e+ments of a proposed project, are not available, a proposal for a pilot investigation may be submitted. The pilot Investigation may then be defined as a project and a protocol prepared containing all other required available Information (see 3A and 3B above).

13. Subsequent data from the pilot investigation will then be used
to develop estimated costs, time requirements and data requirements
for a proposed project on a larger scale.

5. SPECIAL REPORTS. There is also a provision for requesting special
one-the reports. These requests must also contain the applicable
portions of the protocol described in 3A and 3B above. Every attempt
will be made to be responsive to the need for special reports However,
$th the present equipment a special program will generally have to be
Gritten for each special report. If too many requests for special
reports are received the DPSC staff might become overtaxed It will be
necessary, therefore, for those originating requests to consider whether
the desired information could be better obtained manually from their
own files. The Systems Consultant will be available-to assist in making
this evaluation.

6. EMERGENCY REQUESTS FOR DATA. A special request procedures is established
for data needed in a crisis situation. In such instances special reports
may be requested by telephone through director channels so as to expedite
the request, A request for emergent data originating from a Service Unit
Director, for example, would go directly to the Area Director and
if concurred in, on to the IRS Director. The IDS Director, then would
be the only source of authorization to DPSC for fulfilling the request
. on. an immediate priority basis.

It is the intent of this directive that a crisis need for data might
relate to epidemics, operational, or management situations.: Recognizing
that emergent requests for special reports must be very limited in
number, the judgment of the various director8 involved is applicable in
determination that the need is of highest priority.

H. l. Chadwick

fanEmery A. Johnson, M. D.
Assistant Surgeon General
Director, Indian Health Service